

# HERITAGE COMMISSION

## *Draft Minutes*

*December 3, 2009*

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, December 3, 2009, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Philip Donovan, Marilyn Fraser, Dr. Bryant Tolles, James McConaha, Carol Durgy Brooks, and Robert V. Johnson, II. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present. Absent from the meeting were Vice Chairperson Frederick Richards, Committee Members Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Dr. Black, and Gerry Blanchette.

Chairperson Donovan elevated the alternate members to full member status for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the November 5, 2009 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the November 5, 2009, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Fraser to accept the minutes as presented, and Dr. Tolles seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion accepting the minutes of the November 5, 2009, meeting passed unanimously.

3. Old Business:

Isaac Hill Monument:

Mr. Johnson met on November 12, 2009, with Carlos Baia, Matt Walsh, and Ed Roberge from the City, regarding the Isaac Hill Monument. The outcome of the meeting was that the City would prefer the Isaac Hill Monument be placed in another location besides the bump out on North Main Street, due to the difficulties with snow plowing the area. Mr. Johnson stated that the snow plowing issue is moot if the monument is placed where the bike rack is located in the bump out. Mr. Baia suggested that the monument be placed in Eagle Square, where much of the City's history is already on display.

Chairperson Donovan and Mr. Johnson discussed the possibility of placing the monument to the immediate right of the small indentation that projects out into Eagle Square. Currently, there is a tall sign which lists businesses located with the Square, along with brass plaques commemorating those who donated to the Eagle Square project. Mr. Johnson stated that he spoke to the City's Engineer, Ed Roberge, about placing the monument near the lamp post on the bump out.

Mr. McConaha stated that he spoke with Mayor Bouley and conveyed the resistance of the City to have the monument located in the bump out. Mr. McConaha suggested to the Mayor that the bike rack on the bump out be removed and the monument located in its place. Mr. McConaha's position is that he would like the

monument placed so that pedestrians would not trip over it. He also suggested that an informational marker be placed on the building where Isaac Hill's home stood.

Mr. McConaha suggested that the Heritage Commission compromise by placing the monument in Eagle Square if the City would pay for the informational marker, made to the Heritage Commission's specifications. He questioned what material would be best suited for the informative marker. Mr. Woodward stated that for other signs located in Eagle Square, there were specifications that the markers would be vandal resistant (i.e., scratching, marking, or spray painting).

Mr. Johnson said he wouldn't vote against having the monument placed in Eagle Square, but is concerned that the tall sign listing the Eagle Square businesses would overshadow the monument. He inquired as to whether the tall sign could be moved. Mr. Woodward stated that he is not sure who is responsible for the signs as he doesn't believe the City is responsible for them. Chairperson Donovan stated that his major concern is that people are able to see the monument.

Mr. Johnson stated that he and Chairperson Donovan talked about going to visit with the Mayor and City Manager to discuss this issue further. Ms. Brooks suggested that the Heritage Commission table their decision until after seeing how many times the snow plow hits the bike rack throughout the winter. Ms. Fraser suggested that the City may not change their minds regarding the placement of the monument, and that the Heritage Commission needed to decide how long they would wait before agreeing on a place for the monument.

Mr. McConaha made a motion to have Chairperson Donovan and Mr. Johnson meet with the City Manager and Mayor outlining the Heritage Commission's first choice to place the monument on the bump out on North Main Street and its second choice to place the monument in Eagle Square, with the City paying for the informative marker. The motion was seconded by Ms. Fraser. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any further discussion regarding the monument. The motion accepting the motion passed unanimously.

*Concord School District Consolidation Plan:*

Chairperson Donovan stated that Mr. McConaha has been very involved as a citizen and peripherally as a Heritage Commission member with the School Board's consolidation plan for some of the City's elementary schools. Both Chairperson Donovan and Mr. McConaha drafted a letter to the School Board regarding the preservation of Concord's elementary school buildings. The finalized letter was sent to the School Board members, City Council members, the Energy & Environmental Advisory Committee, and the NH Division of Historical Resources.

The Heritage Commission received a copy of a letter to Matt Cashman of the Concord School District, regarding a Request for Project Review of the three school buildings and seven residences, which are more than fifty years old. The letter stated that Individual Inventory Forms for these properties, prepared by a qualified Architectural Historian, would need to be submitted to the NH Division of Historical Resources for review.

Mr. McConaha was alarmed that the architects' proposals seem to show less regard for renovations, especially for Conant School. He assumed that the architects would provide two plans for each school (Conant and Kimball): one for renovations and one for demolition and new buildings. He stated that there has been no public information regarding the energy costs for renovating versus demolition and building.

Ms. Fraser thought the letter that was sent by Chairperson Donovan should also be sent to the Concord Monitor. Mr. McConaha remembered that the Heritage Commission discussed using the letter as a template for a newspaper article or editorial.

Mr. Johnson asked whether the Heritage Commission should prioritize as to which school building the focus of their interest. Ms. Fraser said that she does not feel that Heritage Commission should prioritize the school buildings, but instead focus on all the buildings within the consolidation plan. Chairperson Donovan stated that one of the challenges facing the Heritage Commission is the time frame in which the School Board needs to make a decision due to the bond issue and the availability of State funding.

Dr. Tolles asked how much historical documentation was available for these school buildings. Mr. McConaha stated that he didn't believe there was much documentation; however, Ms. Hengen has enough knowledge about the neighborhoods to know that they should be eligible for historic determination. Ms. Brooks stated that Dewey School is already on the National Register, and perhaps the Kimball and Morrill buildings could be as well. She also stated that the Garrison Building was once a school and has now been adapted for use as a child care center.

Mr. McConaha asked whether the School Board has looked at the City's Master Plan priorities, as referenced in the Heritage Commission's letter. Mr. Woodward responded that the School Board does not have to comply with the City's Master Plan. Dr. Tolles asked whether the City has demolished any other public buildings recently. Mr. Woodward stated that after 1970, many buildings were saved because of the preservation laws which were enacted at the national level. Chairperson Donovan stated that the Concord 20/20 plan was to preserve the neighborhood feel of the City and to keep schools downtown. He felt that the School Board should operate under the constraints of the City's Master Plan and Concord 20/20's plan.

According to Mr. McConaha, the Kimball School was originally built as a high school, and the Morrill Building originally hosted vocational training programs. Mr. Woodward stated that there had been another elementary school building on North Spring Street at the corner of School Street, which may have been the original Kimball School.

Mr. Woodward stated that he has been playing phone tag with Deborah Gagne, Grants Coordinator for the NH Division of Historical Resources, regarding the Certified Local Government Grant. The Heritage Commission submitted a grant application for \$25,000, and may receive \$15,000.

Mr. McConaha suggested that the Heritage Commission move forward in sending a version of the letter sent to the School Board to the Concord Monitor. All agreed. He also stated that he has an appointment with Jennifer Goodman, Executive Director of the NH Preservation Alliance, to get information regarding the energy costs for both the renovation and building new of the school buildings.

[Dr. Tolles left the meeting at 5:50 p.m.]

Chairperson Donovan suggested inviting Dr. Chris Rath, Concord School Superintendent, and Matt Cashman, School District Project Manager, to the January 7, 2010, Heritage Commission meeting. Mr. McConaha thought it would be an opportunity for the Heritage Commission to bring additional information to the School District. Ms. Brooks stated that it would also be an opportunity for the Heritage Commission to get an update

of the School District's newest approach. She said that it may also help the School District to move forward on the Heritage Commission's and the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources' letters.

[Ms. Fraser left the meeting at 5:55 p.m.]

4. New Business:

Heritage Commission Sign Program:

Ms. Brooks suggested that the Heritage Commission Sign Program display be brought back over to the City Hall building. She was also concerned about the original easel used to hold the display. She stated that it was donated to the Heritage Commission from Advantage Signs. Mr. Woodward said that he would contact the City's maintenance staff to see about moving the display from the City Council Chambers to City Hall.

Lavery House:

Mr. Woodward said that the Concord Monitor had called him inquiring about the history of the Lavery House on Pleasant Street. He told the Concord Monitor that the Concord Insider had already interviewed him. Ms. Hengen and Vice Chair Richards are looking into the history of the Lavery property, which now belongs to the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Clinic and had been subject to a life estate for the former owner who is now deceased.

Recognition of Trinity Baptist Church:

Mr. McConaha suggested that the Heritage Commission recognize Trinity Baptist Church for the upkeep of their historic property. Mr. Johnson suggested that the Heritage Commission create a letter to provide to those entities who really embrace the preservation of historic properties. The signed letters could be presented in a frame to the property owners.

Huntress and Lodge Buildings:

Preservation Consultant Lisa Mausolf has provided the Heritage Commission with documentation she prepared regarding the Lodge and Huntress Buildings, for their information. It was noted that the Lodge Building has already been demolished.

There being no further business or discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Johnson and seconded by Ms. Brooks to adjourn the meeting. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir  
Administrative Specialist  
Planning Division